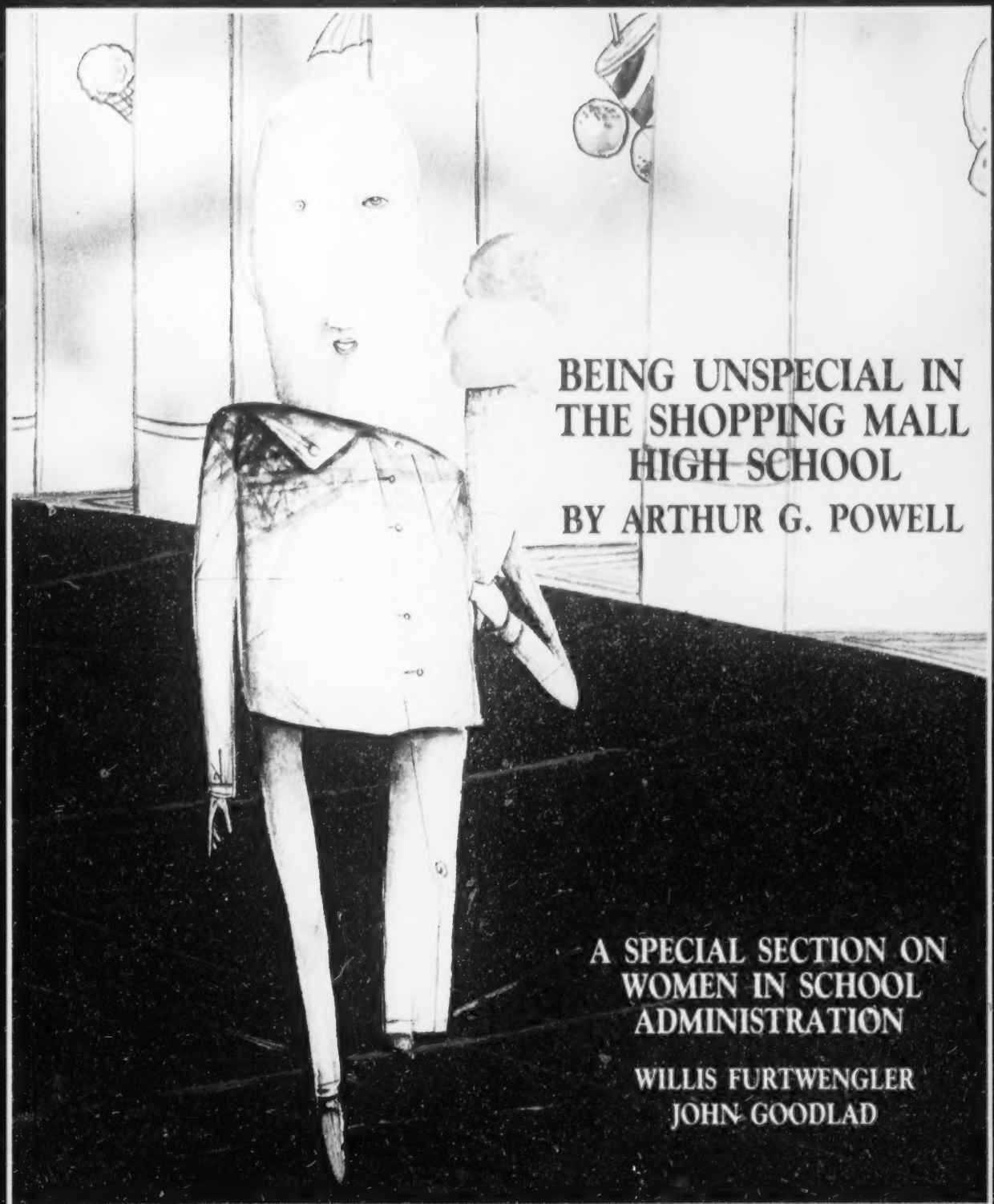
A8680-1A

PHI DELTA KAPPAN

DECEMBER 1985

KAPPAN



BEING UNSPECIAL IN THE SHOPPING MALL HIGH SCHOOL

BY ARTHUR G. POWELL

A SPECIAL SECTION ON WOMEN IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

WILLIS FURTWENGLER

JOHN GOODLAD

Phi Delta December 1985 • Volume 67 • Number 4

KAPPAN

FEATURES

255 **Being Unspecial in the Shopping Mall High School,** *by Arthur G. Powell*

262 **Implementing Strategies for a School Effectiveness Program,** *by Willis J. Furtwengler*

266 **The Great American Schooling Experiment,** *by John I. Goodlad*

272 **ECS at 20: New Vitality and New Possibilities,** *by Donald H. Layton*

277 **Teaching Critical Thinking, Part 2: Possible Solutions,** *by Robert J. Sternberg*

Women in Administration

281 **The Female Educator at Midlife,** *by Mary Lynn Crow*

285 **Women Administrators: Profiles of Success,** *by Lillian C. Woo*

288 **Conflict and the Female Principal,** *by H. Lynn Erickson*

292 **Helping Women Prepare for Principalships,** *by Christa Metzger*

297 **The Woman in the Principal's Chair in Canada,** *by Karin L. Porat*

302 **A Letter from Australia: Vegemite and Apple Pie,** *by Ian Welch*

304 **Lowered Expectations: How Schools Reward Incompetence,** *by Bruce Jackson*

306 **How *Do* They Learn?,** *by Mary P. Melvin*

DEPARTMENTS

250 **THE EDITOR'S PAGE,** Watching the Watchers

251 **WASHINGTON REPORT,** *by Anne C. Lewis*

253 **STATELINE,** *by Chris Pipho*

308 **PAR, Adapting Instruction to Individual Needs: An Eclectic Approach,** *by Deborah Burnett Strother*

312 **DE JURE,** Supreme Court Agrees to Reconsider First Amendment Rights of Students, *by Thomas J. Flygare*

313 **IN CANADA,** A Potpourri of Policy Issues, *by Stirling McDowell*

315 **PROTOTYPES,** Two-Way Instructional Television, *by William B. Kested;* Training Preservice Teachers for Inner-City Schools, *by Mae V. Gamble*

317 **BOOKS,** *Laurence D. Brown*

320 **NEWSNOTES**

325 **BACKTALK**

Cover Illustration: Kevin Pope

Helping Women Prepare for Principalships

by Christa Metzger

Though female school administrators are still rarities, programs are emerging to help provide support to women on their way up the career ladder. An Arizona program known as Castle Hot Springs worked wonders for women in that state.

WHEN I BECAME principal of an elementary school in 1974 – the first (and, for some years, the only) female principal in my school district – I felt highly visible and lonely. Some of my male colleagues gave me fatherly advice; others just sat back and waited to see whether I would survive. At the first statewide conference of principals that I attended, I remember trying to pick out, amid a mass of three-piece suits, the sprinkling of other women who held principalships in the state. And Arizona was not the only state in which female principals were scarce in those days.

Women administrators are still rarities in U.S. education today. A 1982 study by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) found that women hold only 16% of all U.S. principalships. (Twenty-three percent of U.S. elementary principals and 7% of U.S. secondary principals are women.) According to the same study, only 1.8% of all superintendents in the U.S. are women.[1]

Several factors are commonly cited to explain the small number of women in leadership positions in U.S. education. These factors include: sex-role stereotyping, sex discrimination, personal and family-imposed constraints, women's low career aspirations, women's lack of self-confidence and initiative, women's lack of sponsors within the existing power structure, and an insufficient pool of highly qualified women.

A variety of programs were begun during the Seventies to enhance women's administrative skills and thus their career opportunities.[2] Some of these programs prepared women for administrative positions through coursework, internships, or workshops. Others sought to enhance employment opportunities for women through affirmative action plans and the involvement of administrators already in the field. But the effects of such programs on women's advancement in school administration have not been carefully documented.

Data are available, however, on the outcomes of a training program conducted in Arizona from 1979 through 1983 for women who wished to become principals. That program measurably increased the number of female principals in Arizona; it also markedly improved attitudes in Arizona toward women as school administrators.

THE IDEA FOR the Arizona program arose in 1978, when five Arizona women (two assistant superintendents, one deputy associate superintendent with the state department of education, and two principals – of whom I was one) attended a training workshop in Los Angeles. The workshop was conducted in three U.S. cities that year by the AASA, with funding from the Ford Foundation. The purpose of the workshop was to provide experiences that would help women prepare for superintendencies.

Interest in the AASA workshop was high. Nationally, more than 600 women applied. Only 75 women were selected

CHRISTA METZGER (Arizona State University Chapter) is superintendent of Tolleson (Ariz.) Elementary School District. *She wishes to thank the following individuals for their help in gathering data for this article: Deborah Dillon, former project director of AWARE West; Ardeth Cropper, a member of the original steering committee, former superintendent of the Glendale (Ariz.) Elementary Schools and currently associate professor of school administration at Northern Arizona University; and Karen Lindberg, a doctoral student and former Castle Hot Springs participant.*

Illustration by Andrea Eberbach

to participate, however – 25 for each workshop.

On returning from the Los Angeles workshop, three of us formed the nucleus of a planning committee intent on starting a similar program in Arizona. But we decided that our workshops would focus on women who aspired to principalships, since female principals make up the pool from which female superintendents are ultimately drawn. The Arizona Department of Education agreed to provide a staff member to help us in our planning. From this first step grew a unique planning effort, cooperatively staffed and funded by Arizona School Administrators, Inc., Project Equity (a Title IV program), the Arizona Department of Education, and our steering committee of concerned women administrators.

Through the combined efforts of these groups, two workshops took place – one in 1979, the other in 1980 – for women aspiring to become principals. The training program came to be known as "Castle Hot Springs," the name of the picturesque retreat where the workshops were held, in the beautiful desert mountains north of Phoenix.

By 1981 the Castle Hot Springs workshops had become well-known to female educators and educational leaders across the state. They encouraged us to apply for a Ford Foundation grant, in order to fund the program for three more years – not only in Arizona, but in Colorado and New Mexico as well.

The Ford Foundation funded our project, and the sex-equity specialist with the Arizona Department of Education, who had spearheaded the planning effort, was officially hired as full-time director. As part of a national network of regional projects under the aegis of AASA's Project AWARE (Assisting Women to Advance through Resources and Encouragement), our newly expanded program was officially titled AWARE West.

In Arizona alone, between 1979 and 1983, some 40 to 50 women participated in the program each year. A total of 238 Arizona women took part over the five-year period. Most of the participants were teachers; the rest were entry-level administrators, i.e., department heads, consultants, counselors, or assistant principals. Most of the participants were between the ages of 36 and 41. They were selected to represent all areas of the state and all racial or ethnic groups.

THIS TRAINING PROJECT proved to be exceedingly effective. As Table 1 shows, 52% of all workshop participants became assistant principals, principals, or district-level administrators within four years after completion of the workshop. Sixty-three percent of the first group of participants have been promoted since their participation.

To place these findings in proper perspective requires a brief review of the recent history of principalships in Arizona. In the four-year period from September 1980 to September 1984, the number of female principals in Arizona increased from 121 to 217 (see Table 2). Thus the percentage of principalships held by women increased from 12% in 1980 to 25% in 1984. And, of the 217 women who held Arizona principalships in 1984, 70 (32%) had attended the Castle Hot Springs workshops.

As Table 3 shows, the percentage of females among the first- and second-year principals in Arizona has also increased. In 1970 about 10% of all first- and second-year principals in the state were women – a proportion that remained relatively constant through 1976, when about 12% of the new prin-

cipals were female. Between 1976 and 1980 the percentage of first- and second-year principals in Arizona who were female fluctuated between 12% and 23%. In 1981, 24% of the new principals were women. However, when the 1983-84 school year began, 33% of all first- or second-year principals in Arizona were women. Moreover, a significant percentage of the new female principals in recent years have been "graduates" of the Castle Hot Springs workshop: 25% in the fall of 1980, 35% in 1981, 39% in 1983, and 48% (counting first-year principals only) in 1984 (see Table 3).

The number of women who are members of Arizona School Administrators, Inc., has risen during the same period (see Table 4), as has the number of women who hold leadership positions in that organization. Women accounted for 15% of the total membership in the fall of 1980 and for 28% of the total membership in the fall of 1984. The number of females on the executive board rose from 13% in 1980 to 36% in 1984. And, once again, many of the new female members of Arizona School Administrators, Inc., had been trained at Castle Hot Springs. For example, 39% of the female members in the fall of 1981 had been workshop participants.

Clearly, a variety of sociopolitical factors have helped women to move into principalships in Arizona. For example, an early retirement law that the state legislature passed in 1984 created several openings – and thus more opportunities for women to be hired. Without the Castle Hot Springs workshops, however, the pool of highly qualified female candidates to fill these vacancies would have been significantly smaller. The Castle Hot Springs training program has become, for Arizona women, a major steppingstone into administrative positions.

The program has also changed the attitudes of potential and current women administrators about their own worth and their career opportunities. In Arizona today, a strong network of women helps other interested women to achieve psychological and professional readiness for careers in administration. The mutual support and encouragement and the candid feedback supplied by this network have helped its members to en-

The program has changed the attitudes of potential and current women administrators about their own worth and their opportunities.

TABLE 1.
Promotions of Castle Hot Springs Participants, 1979-84

Year of Attendance at Workshop	Total N	Number of Promotions to Various Types of Positions*								Total Promotions		Number of Participants in Other Categories		
		EA	EP	JA	JP	SA	SP	ES	AS	N	%	Could Not Be Contacted	Moved, Retired, Left Education	Not Promoted
1979	40	1	9	1	1	5	2	5	1	25	63	7	2	6
1980	47	1	14	1	1	3	0	5	1	26	55	15	3	3
1981	55	2	10	0	3	2	2	8	2	29	53	15	4	7
1982	51	0	6	0	3	5	0	6	1	21	41	20	5	5
1983	45	2	11	1	0	3	1	4	0	22	49	14	9	0
TOTAL	238	6	50	3	8	18	5	28	5	123	52	71	23	21

*EA = elementary assistant principal, EP = elementary principal, JA = junior high assistant principal, JP = junior high principal, SA = secondary assistant principal, SP = secondary principal, ES = educational services (district-level administrative position), and AS = assistant superintendent.

TABLE 2.
Gender of Newly Hired Principals in Arizona, 1980-81 Through 1984-85

Level of Principalship	1980-81				1981-82				1982-83				1983-84				1984-85			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Elementary	743*	87	115*	13	561**	81	128	19	554**	79	145	21	532*	75	180*	25	510*	71	206*	29
Jr. High School	—	—	—	—	63	93	5	7	85	89	11	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Secondary School	147	96	6	4	141	95	8	5	119	90	13	10	130	92	11	8	130	92	11	8
TOTAL	890	88	121	12	765	84	141	16	758	82	169	18	662	78	191	22	640	75	217	25

*Includes not only middle school and junior high principals but also all personnel classified as head teachers.
**Includes all personnel classified as head teachers.
Sources: Arizona Department of Education and Arizona School Administrators, Inc.

gage in honest self-assessment, to develop greater self-confidence, and to develop a stronger sense of personal identity. Even when Castle Hot Springs "graduates" have not been chosen to fill administrative positions for which they have applied, the teams who interviewed them have repeatedly stated that these candidates stood out because of their well-written résumés and letters of application and their careful preparations for the interviews.

WHY WAS THE Castle Hot Springs training program so successful? What were the ingredients that accounted for the positive outcomes?

The heart of the project was a three-day training workshop, conducted annually at the Castle Hot Springs conference center, a facility owned by Arizona State University. (In 1983 the university sold the conference center, and the final workshop was moved to the Rio Rico Resort in southern Arizona.) Three factors contributed to the success of the workshop: the process of recruitment and selection, the use of resident consultants, and a well-designed workshop agenda.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

As the first step in the recruitment and selection of participants, Arizona superintendents and principals were asked to identify women whom they perceived to be potential leaders. This procedure helped to overcome one persistent obstacle that women have faced in obtaining administrative positions: the lack of sponsorship by someone within the existing power structure. Annual surveys of workshop participants have consistently shown that most of them first heard about the Castle Hot Springs program from former participants or from their own superintendents or principals.

The women who were interested in attending the workshops went through a rigorous application process that required paperwork similar to that necessitated by an actual job search. They were instructed to apply for a principalship in "Utopia School District" and to document their reasons for aspiring to this position. Each applicant had to supply a cover letter and a résumé, along with two letters of recommendation from educational leaders who were willing to attest to her potential as an administrator.

A screening committee – composed in the early years of recognized Arizona administrative leaders, but later including former workshop participants as well – selected the final group of participants. Approximately two-thirds of the applicants were included in this final group. The participants or their school districts paid a nominal fee for meals and lodging during the workshop.

The selection criteria included an applicant's desire to become a principal, as evidenced by enrollment in a certification program or attainment of an administrator's certificate; her work experience (with priority given to those applicants with some type of administrative experience); the quality of her letter of application and her résumé; and the quality of the letters of recommendation written in support of her application. The selection process also guaranteed the inclusion of individuals representing a variety of locations within the state, a variety of ethnic groups, and a variety of teaching assignments.

Once a candidate was accepted, the selection committee sent her application for a principalship in "Utopia School District," her résumé, and her cover letter to personnel directors or other top-level administrators in the state. Their critical appraisals of this paperwork were returned to the candidate during the workshop.

Each woman admitted to the workshop received a letter of recognition from her superintendent. The rejected applicants were invited to contact the

TABLE 3.
First- and Second-Year Principals in Arizona, by Gender

Year	Number					New Female Principals Who Attended Castle Hot Springs Workshop %
	Total N	Male N	Male %	Female N	Female %	
1970	90	81	90	9	10	0
1976	120	106	88	14	12	0
1977	75	58	77	17	23	0
1978	88	69	78	19	22	0
1979	104	87	84	17	16	24
1980	110	86	78	24	22	25
1981	96	73	76	23	24	35
1983	213	142	67	71	33	39
1984*	45	16	36	29	64	48

*Includes first-year principals only.
Source: Arizona Department of Education.

TABLE 4.
Officers and Members of Arizona School Administrators, Inc., by Gender

Year	Officers				Members			
	Male N	Male %	Female N	Female %	Male N	Male %	Female N	Female %
1980-81	54	87	8	13	805	85	138	15
1981-82	54	83	11	17	683	76	219	24
1982-83	45	79	12	21	681	75	232	25
1983-84	44	71	18	29	692	73	256	27
1984-85	37	64	21	36	722	72	274	28

"School would be all right if Mrs. Reed weren't so hellbent on teaching."

screening committee to find out why they had been unsuccessful. Many of these women reapplied in subsequent years and were accepted.

THE RESIDENT CONSULTANTS

About 20 consultants were available during each workshop to interact with participants. This created a participant/consultant ratio of approximately 2-1. The consultants were volunteers – two-thirds of them women, who were themselves successful administrators in Arizona or in neighboring states, and one-third of them men who held positions of power in Arizona education. These men included the executive director and the president of Arizona School Administrators, Inc., the associate executive director of the Arizona School Boards Association, the associate superintendent of the Arizona Department of Education, professors in the Department of Educational Administration at Arizona State University, and respected superintendents from various Arizona school districts.

The formal and informal interactions among consultants and workshop participants created an intense, but healthy and supportive, learning climate. During the workshop and in the months that followed, the consultants served as role models; they also provided a network of contacts for the participants. In several cases, consultants established ongoing mentor relationships with workshop participants.

THE WORKSHOP AGENDA

Each year, a planning committee worked hard to insure a balance of topics and activities on the workshop agenda. That agenda consisted primarily of activities that simulated a job search. The workshop always served as a laboratory in which participants could assess their administrative attitudes and competencies and practice such skills as interviewing for a job and writing a résumé.

Working in small groups, participants and consultants role-played the process of interviewing for a principalship in "Utopia School District." The consultants asked the participants standard interview questions, which had been collected from school districts around the state. Other members of the small groups observed each interview and gave the candidate immediate feedback on her strengths and weaknesses. The workshop participants rotated from group to group, so that they could observe the consultants' varying styles of interviewing. Each participant had an opportunity to be interviewed, as well as to observe and critique the performance of several other "applicants." The participants later rated this activity as one of the most valuable experiences afforded by the workshop.

In addition to simulated interviews and workshop sessions focused on the evaluation of résumés and letters of application, the agenda included presentations and activities on topics related to the job search. Workshop sessions covered such topics as "Women at the Top," "Stress and Conflicts Unique to Women," "Women Helping Women," "Getting the First Principalship," and "Competencies Needed for the Principalship." Group discussions addressed such issues as the role of the principal, how to locate vacancies, goal setting, team-building skills, career planning, and experiences common to first-year principals. The agenda also included social and recreational activities that encouraged the participants and consultants to interact.

Throughout each day of the workshop and late into the evening, the energy of the participants and consultants was directed not at bemoaning the fact of past discrimination but at developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that would bring about positive changes. By sharing fears, hopes, and successes, the participants learned from one another and began to realistically assess their own potential for leadership.

Participants stayed in touch after each workshop through regular newsletters, which announced promotions or special recognitions granted to the participants themselves or to other women administrators in the state. Each year, former workshop participants also gathered for an annual opening-of-school brunch and for a special meeting preceding the annual conference of state administrators. Current and aspiring women administrators also used frequent phone calls and informal get-togethers as opportunities to seek advice and to share successes. Over the years, a strong network developed among former workshop participants and workshop consultants.

THE FUNDING for AWARE West (Castle Hot Springs) has ended. But it is certain that at least some of the activities will be carried on.

Former workshop participants have appointed a steering committee to discuss and plan future activities, including a regular newsletter to maintain the network that the workshops established. In September 1984 the steering committee held the customary opening-of-school brunch, and nearly 100 women attended the event – many of them guests, who wanted to know whether they would have an opportunity in the future to attend a Castle Hot Springs workshop.

In March 1985 the inservice training committee of Arizona School Administrators, Inc., held a conference for men and women who aspire to administrative positions in Arizona education. And in June 1985 an organization for aspiring administrators, Arizona AWARE, was formed.

Without a doubt, the *effects* of AWARE West will endure. This training program gave several hundred Arizona women increased visibility and competence, better job-search skills, and the courage to seek positions as school administrators. Not all these women will become administrators. But all of them will certainly function more effectively as educators because of their better understanding of their own capabilities and of the administrator's role. And they will be better prepared, both psychologically and professionally, to apply for available administrative positions – and to be selected to fill these openings.

The impact of Castle Hot Springs is perhaps best illustrated by the following excerpt from one of the many letters sent to us by workshop participants:

> Your constructive criticism with regard to my interviewing technique was greatly appreciated. . . . I have revised my initial letter, my cover letter, and my résumé and have also updated [the references listed in] my placement file. The best part is that I am a brand-new principal! Can you believe it? I signed my contract yesterday. . . . My superintendent called me at work and told me that the board had been particularly impressed with my confidence and composure. He said it was the best interview he'd ever seen! The neat thing was, I knew it, too. . . .

1. Effie Jones and Xenia Montenago, *Recent Trends in the Representation of Women and Minorities in School Administration and Problems in Documentation* (Arlington, Va.: Office of Minority Affairs, American Association of School Administrators, July 1982).
2. Ellen Kimmel, Dorothy Harlow, and Mary Topping, "Special Programs to Promote Women into Educational Administration," *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 1979, pp. 586-89.